

App. Serial No.: 10/634,421
Atty. Docket No.: 0003-033P1

REMARKS

These remarks are in response to the Office Action dated December 14, 2005, which has a shortened statutory period for response set to expire March 14, 2006. No extension of time is required.

Claims

Claims 1, 2, and 4-37 are pending in the above-identified application. Claims 1, 2, 4-22, and 32-37 are allowed. Claims 23 and 27-31 are rejected over prior art. Claims 24-26 are objected to, but indicated to include allowable subject matter. Claims 23, 25-26, and 35 are amended, and Claims 24, 30, and 31 are canceled. Claims 1, 2, 4-22, 27-29, 32-34, and 36-37 remain as filed or previously presented. Reconsideration is requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 23 and 27-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,460,327 (Johnson et al.). Claims 30 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,460,327 (Evenson).

The claims are amended to render the rejections moot.

Claim 23 is amended to include the subject matter of Claim 24, which is indicated by the Examiner to include allowable subject matter. Therefore, amended Claim 23 is now allowable. Claim 24 is canceled, and Claim 25, which is indicated to include allowable subject matter, is amended to depend from Claim 23. Claims 27-29 depend from Claim 23 and are allowable for at least the same reasons as Claim 23.

Claim 26 is indicated by the Examiner to include allowable subject matter. Therefore, Claim 26 is amended herein to be in independent form and to include the limitations of base Claim 23 (prior to the current amendment). There were no intervening claims between base Claim 23 and dependent Claim 26. Claim 26 is now, therefore, allowable.

Claims 30 and 31 are canceled, thus obviating the rejections of those claims.

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Claim 35 is indicated to be allowed. However, Claim 35 depends from rejected base Claim 23. Therefore, Claim 35 is amended herein to be in independent form and to include all of the limitations of prior Claim 23. Claim 35 is, therefore, now allowable.

For the above reasons, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 are moot, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe Claims 1, 2, 4-23, 25-29, and 32-37 are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner undertake any action other than allowance of Claims all remaining claims, or if the Examiner has any questions or suggestions for expediting the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' attorney at (269) 279-8820.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 3/14/06

Larry E. Henneman, Jr.
Larry E. Henneman, Jr., Reg. No. 41,063
Attorney for Applicant(s)
Henneman & Saunders
714 W. Michigan Ave.
Three Rivers, MI 49093

CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION (37 CFR 1.8(a))

I hereby certify that this paper (along with any referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being transmitted via facsimile, on the date shown below, to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, at (571) 273-8300.

Date: 3/14/06

Larry E. Henneman, Jr.
Larry E. Henneman, Jr.